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**BENJAMIN WEST AND HIS WORKS.**

No. II.



THE GOLDEN AGE

## BENJAMIN WEST AND HIS WORKS.

## II.

For a few years succeeding the decision respecting West's profession, which we recorded in the former paper, he employed himself at Philadelphia and New York, in the practice of portrait-painting, and in copying everything good that came under his eye. He produced at this time an original work on the subject of the "Trial of Susannah."

Having raised by his labours, and the kind assistance of his friends and patrons, a small sum of money, Mr. West determined to embrace an opportunity which offered of visiting Italy, in order to extend his views, promote his taste, and obtain a knowledge of all that had been effected by the great masters.

At Rome, the arrival of an American quaker to study the fine arts, caused an astonishing sensation. He was introduced to Cardinal Albani, and through him to the most distinguished persons then in Rome. West, like Reynolds, was at first imperfectly sensible of the beauties of Raphael and Michael Angelo, of the latter of whom he never became a decided admirer. While at Rome, West painted the portrait of Lord Grantham, which was shown to a large company of artists and amateurs, as the production of Mengs, then the most celebrated portrait-painter in Rome. It was at length decided that the colouring surpassed the usual performances of Mengs, but that the drawing was not so good. Mengs himself was so generous as not to feel at all mortified at what had passed, but contracted a friendship for West, and gave him the best advice, as to the course which he should pursue in his travels, and the department of the art to which he should finally devote himself; and this department was the *historical*.

While preparing to visit, in accordance with the advice of Mengs, the schools of art in the principal Italian cities, he was one day strongly impressed by an interview which he had, in the British Coffee-house, with a famous *improvisatore*, to whom the people of Rome gave the flattering name of Homer.

I beheld in this youth, (sang the bard, as he accompanied himself with his guitar,) an instrument chosen by Heaven to create in his native country a taste for those arts which have elevated the nature of man,—an assurance that his land will be the refuge of science and knowledge, when, in the old age of Europe, they shall have forsaken her shores. All things of heavenly origin move westward; and Truth and Art have their periods of light and darkness. Rejoice, O Rome! for thy spirit, immortal and undecayed, now spreads towards a new world, where, like the soul of man in Paradise, it will be perfected more and more.

Such was the substance of this song, and West, who delighted to refer the prophecy to himself, rewarded the singer with money and with tears.

Soon after this we find that the agitations of Rome, so different from the quiet of a Pennsylvanian life, threw him into a dangerous fever, from which the physicians declared he could only recover by being removed to a more tranquil scene. He returned to Leghorn, where, after a lingering sickness of eleven months, he was completely cured. After his recovery he visited all the great schools of Italy, and made a copy of the famous "St. Jerome" of Correggio, which he presented to the Academy of Parma, of which he was elected a member. This piece had such great excellence, that the reigning prince desired to see the artist, who appeared at court with his hat on, which was excused by the prince, who was not ignorant of the character of the quakers, nor of the condescension of the British law in their favour.

Having after this passed through Savoy into France, he resided some time at Paris. He at length arrived in England, in the middle of 1763; and, after due

consideration, determined to settle here; having first sent for Elizabeth Shervell, his wife elect, from Pennsylvania, to whom he was married in 1765, at the church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields.

He soon became acquainted with Reynolds and Wilson, the latter of whom was the best landscape-painter of the day. But his chief obligations were to Dr. Drummond, archbishop of York, who engaged him to paint the story of "Agrippina landing with the ashes of Germanicus." The archbishop was so pleased with the performance, that he immediately introduced both the picture and the artist to the notice of George the Third. That monarch, who had both taste and discernment in the fine arts, was so pleased with it, that he thenceforth made Mr. West the object of his especial favour and patronage. He suggested to him the subject of "The final Departure of Regulus from Rome;" and the applause which the picture received at the first exhibition, was equally gratifying to the artist and his royal patron. West had already painted for Dr. Newton, "The Parting of Hector and Andromache;" and for the bishop of Worcester, "The Return of the Prodigal Son." His love of serious and solemn subjects had thus attracted the special notice of some of the dignitaries of the church.

Mr. West was now frequently invited to spend the evening at Buckingham-house, and his majesty held long conversations with him on the best means of promoting the arts. It was to these that the plan of the Royal Academy owed its origin; an institution calculated, under proper management, to be beneficial to art. On the death of Sir Joshua Reynolds, in 1792, Mr. West, with universal approbation, succeeded to the office of president. After the "Regulus," he painted for the king "The Oath of Hannibal." "The Death of Epaminondas," and several other subjects. For Earl Grosvenor he painted "The Death of Wolfe," so well known from the fine print of Woollet. The most remarkable point about the execution of this last picture is, that the usual affectation of the antique is thrown aside, and the picture represents the actual and natural appearance of the scene of battle at the moment of the death of Wolfe\*.

During the progress of the works on which West was employed by the king, he also painted the portraits of their majesties and the royal family. Sir Joshua Reynolds, who was then president of the Royal Academy, engrossed the profession of portrait-painting with the public at large; while West seemed patented to trace the lineaments of royalty. He made in the whole nine pictures, some with single, others with grouped figures; for which he was paid the sum of two thousand guineas. But the opinion of the best judges on the merits of these productions, as compared with those of Sir Joshua, in the same line, is that though they are well conceived and prettily drawn, they want the life-giving principle, and therefore seem to be but shadows of the living substance. There is no deception;—there is a flatness about them, and the eye seems to see through both the colour and the canvass.

It appears that West's capacity for labour was great, as the large quantity of work which he has left behind him abundantly testifies. As he distributed his hours of study with exactness, one day was like another in his life. On the pictures especially desired by the king, he expended much thought and labour; and to render them worthy of the place which was destined to receive them, he "trimmed," as he told his majesty, "his midnight lamp." Hence, his chief

\* For an engraving of this picture, and a narrative of the subject of it, see *Saturday Magazine*, Vol. XIV., p. 209.

works impart to the beholder the sensation of labour rather than of the acme of talent. His imagination was mainly in accordance with subjects of a soft and kind nature, such as those which form the frontispieces to these papers. Where the nature of the service in which he was employed by the king led him to cope with the old masters, as in the "Last Supper," the "Crucifixion, and the "Annunciation," he had of course no hope of excelling, when the "odiousness of comparison" was resorted to.

After performing many historical works, West received from his sovereign a commission to adorn St. George's Hall, in Windsor Castle, with a series of paintings, referring to the national history of the reign of Edward the Third; and when this was completed, he suggested, and was directed to execute, a course of thirty-five paintings, illustrative of the history of revealed religion. These paintings were intended to adorn a private chapel or oratory at Windsor. He divided his work into four dispensations,—the Antediluvian, the Patriarchal, the Mosaic, and the Prophetic. There were in all thirty-six subjects, eighteen of which belonged to the Old Testament, and the rest to the New. They were all sketched, and twenty-eight were executed, for which West received 21,705*l*. The whole sum which West obtained from the king, for these and his other works, amounted to 34,187*l*.

Soon after his elevation to the presidency of the Royal Academy, the Duke of Gloucester called on West from the king, to inquire if the honour of knighthood would be acceptable to him. West intimated to his Royal Highness, with every profession of humility and respect for the king, that, if his Majesty had offered a baronetcy, with a permanent income to support the title, it might have been desirable for him to receive his Majesty's favour. But no further notice was taken of this affair; he continued, nevertheless, to frequent the palace as usual, and as usual, his reception was warm and friendly.

During the peace of Amiens, he visited Paris, for the purpose of seeing the collection of statues and pictures in the Louvre; on which occasion he obtained a distinguished reception, not only from the French artists, but from the French government. The honours paid to Mr. West in France were not favourably viewed in England; and Mr. Wyatt, at the next election, was seated in the president's chair, though, in due time, West was restored with the approbation of all. Another affair of still greater importance occurred in 1801, when the court was at Weymouth; for the queen sent him directions by Mr. Wyatt, to suspend all the pictures then painting for his Majesty's chapel at Windsor, until further orders. This took place during a temporary illness of the king, who, upon his recovery, was graciously pleased to tell West,—“Go on with your work, West; go on with the pictures, and I will take care of you.” This was his last personal intercourse with his sovereign: he continued the progress of the pictures till the regency, when he was dismissed.

He now resorted to the public, and exhibited his principal pictures with great profit and fame. The British Institution rewarded him with three thousand guineas for his picture of “Christ healing the sick;” and a copy of it, which he presented to the hospital at Philadelphia, enabled the committee of the hospital, by the exhibition of the picture, to enlarge the building, and receive more patients.

West was now advancing in years. Mrs. West, with whom he had lived happily for more than half a century, died in December, 1817. He himself followed her in March, 1820. His body was removed to one of the saloons of the Royal Academy, and interred with

great pomp in St. Paul's cathedral. The ceremony was rendered august, not only by the presence of the academicians and students, but also by the attendance of some of the most distinguished individuals in the kingdom.

### GARDEN HERBS. III.

#### THYME.

O'er fringed heaths, and mountain steeps,  
With silent steps the artful Thyma creeps,  
Unfolds with fragrant bloom her purple flow'rs,  
And leads with frolic hand the circling hours.

ROWDEN.

Two species of Thyme are natives of Britain, the *Thymus serpyllum*, and *Thymus acinos*; but that which is so commonly cultivated in our gardens, the *Thymus vulgaris*, was introduced to this country from the south of Europe, certainly before the middle of the sixteenth century, though the precise period is not ascertained. It grows wild in stony situations on the hills of Spain, Italy, the south of France, and Greece. The climate of Spain seems peculiarly favourable to its growth, as to that of other sweet herbs. We are told that at Marbella, about midway between Malaga and Gibraltar, sage, thyme, marjoram, lavender, myrtle, and rosemary, grow to the height of six feet, and embalm the air on all sides. With us, thyme is but a low, shrubby evergreen, scarcely attaining a foot in height, but so aromatic in smell and pungent in taste as to become a very valuable addition to the herb garden. Its leaves are smooth and oval, and its flowers smaller than those of the wild thyme. Another species, called the citron-scented, or lemon-thyme (*Thymus citriodorus*), is also cultivated for culinary purposes, and is less pungent and more grateful than the common sort. It is a trailing evergreen of small growth, and remarkable for the peculiar scent from which it derives its distinctive name. Both sorts of thyme are perennial, both may be propagated from seed, and both may likewise be propagated from offsets, or partings of the roots, which is the easiest method, and the one most generally adopted.

Thyme was much esteemed and cultivated by the ancients, for the sake of the excellent honey procured from the places where it grew abundantly. The neighbourhood of Athens was said to produce the best honey in the world on that account, for the hills and mountains surrounding that celebrated city were covered with the fragrant herb. Pliny complains that he had great difficulty in raising any of this thyme from seed; for, says he, “It is the nature of Attic thyme not to thrive or live but within the air and breath of the sea.” Thyme was also highly prized for affording excellent pasturage for sheep and goats, so that the countries where it was plentiful obtained a considerable revenue by receiving the flocks of Rome, in order that the luxurious city might be supplied with food of the highest relish. It is very well known that our wild thyme has a similar effect in improving the flavour of the flesh of the animals that feed on it, and that venison coming from districts where the herb is abundant, and mutton procured from the South Downs of Sussex, where there is much thyme growing, are prized above mutton and venison in general.

Thyme was highly extolled in former ages as a medicine. Its name is derived from a Greek word which signifies courage and strength, and it was supposed to possess an extraordinary power in reviving the spirits, and restoring those who were overburdened with toil and fatigue. The Romans considered it a sovereign remedy in cases of lunacy and extreme melancholy, and maintained that the perfume of it alone had



sufficient efficacy to restore from epileptic fits. It was also considered to be an effectual antidote against poison. The medicinal qualities ascribed to it by our old herbalists are also many. Gerard tells us, among many other excellences, that "Time boyled in water and drunken is good against the cough and shortness of breath," and also that "made into a powder, it is good against the sciatic, the pain in the side and breast, and is profitable also for such as are fearful, melancholy, and troubled in mind." It is spoken of in CULPEPER'S *Herbal* as "A noble strengthener of the lungs." It is recommended to be used as an ointment for removing warts and other swellings, and the gout is said to be relieved by thyme, in works of the above class; that we might suppose it a kind of universal remedy, except for a short list appended to some of the descriptions, and bearing the title of *Hurts*. One of the hurts, or injurious properties of thyme seems to be, that when used immoderately it is apt to heat the body.

The essential oil of thyme is a good stomachic; it excites appetite and promotes perspiration. It is likewise useful in easing the toothache, being applied on cotton to the part affected. The culinary use of this herb is extensive. It enters into broths and ragouts, and is a pleasant ingredient in seasonings for meat, more especially lemon-thyme, which gives to them nearly the same flavour as if lemon peel had been used. In former times it was used to impart its peculiar flavour to cheese, in the same way that sage is still used; but we are not aware of its being so employed at the present time. A little thyme mixed with wine is said to give it a grateful savour, a very penetrating smell and taste, and a restorative power to those who are suffering from loss of appetite. The inhabitants of Seville in cleansing their wine vessels, use a decoction of thyme, on account of its pleasing smell, and employ it also in scenting the vessels in which they preserve their grapes.

The culture of thyme is very simple, as both kinds of it are easily propagated by cuttings or slips of the young branches, every bit of which, when planted in the spring, in some shady place, and well watered, is nearly sure to take root. The lemon-thyme spreads very fast, and is all the better for being taken up occasionally, parted, and planted separately in a light soil. If large beds of thyme are required, it will be necessary to raise the plants from seed, which should be sown about the beginning of April, in a light, dry soil, properly dug over and prepared. The seed must not be sown too thickly, or be covered with too deep a layer of mould. The young plants will not be many weeks in making their appearance, and when they have attained a tolerable size, they must be removed to another border, and planted at six or eight inches' distance from each other. They will require to be watered until they have taken root in their new soil, or if the earth is occasionally hoed up between them, they will prosper the better.

A very severe winter will sometimes destroy thyme, but this does not often happen; at any rate, it is well to have a supply of the herb dried for winter use. This must be done by cutting it when it is in blossom, and perfectly free from moisture. It should be hung in an airy, but shady place to dry, and where it can receive no wet from rain or dews, during the drying, and afterwards preserved in paper bags.

We find the thyme (*thymus*) family to be placed in Linnaeus's fourteenth class, *Didynamia*, or having two long stamens, and 1 two shorter ones, and in the order *Gymnospermia*, that is, with exposed or naked seeds. The botanical notice respecting wild thyme is as follows:—

It varies with large blossoms, or with broad leaves, or with the scent of lemon-peel used in sauces, or with smooth narrow leaves, or hoary leaves, or shrubbiness, or hairiness, or scentlessness. The whole plant is fragrant, and an infusion of the leaves removes the head-ache occasioned by sitting up at night. Bees are very fond of it, as they are of all aromatic plants.

Wild thyme is, indeed, a more beautiful plant than our garden herb, and very pleasant it is to tread on the soft and glowing carpet with which it covers some of our sunny hillocks, to inhale the delightful fragrance it spreads around, and to listen to the low hum of insects, ever busy among its numerous flowers. Shakspeare remembered some beautiful spot rich in floral treasures, when he sang—

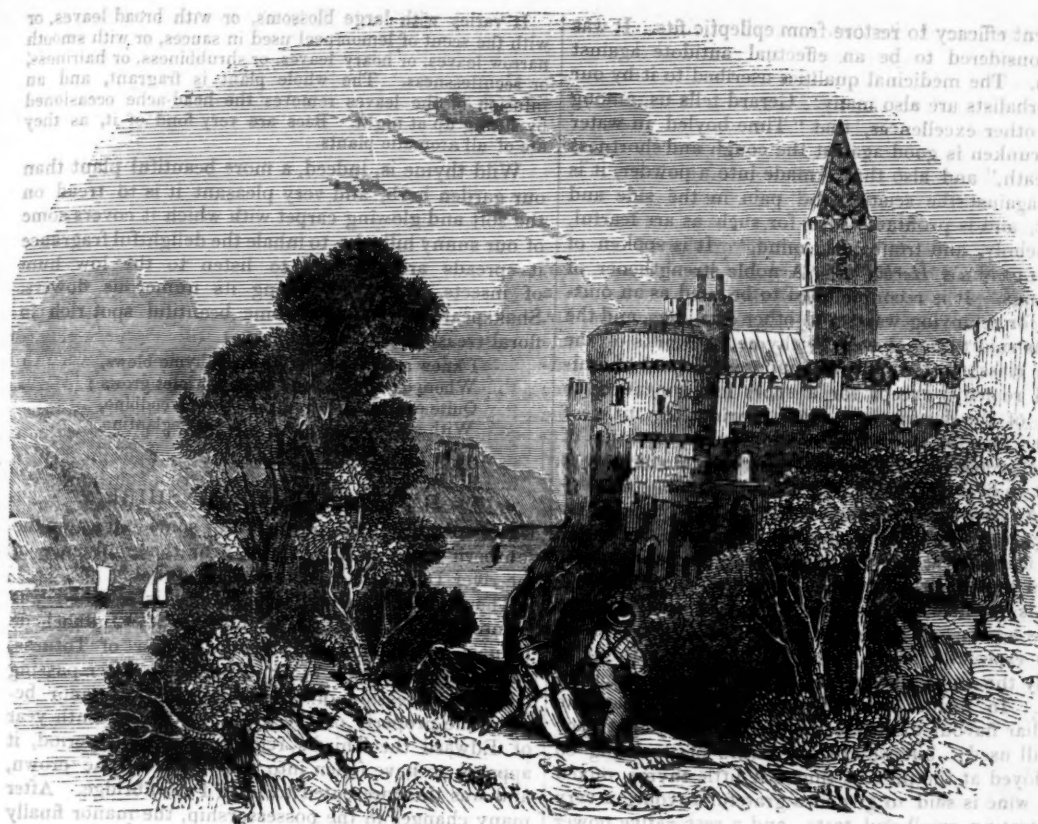
I know a bank where the wild thyme blows,  
Where ox-lips, and the nodding violet grows;  
Quite over-canopied with luscious woodbine,  
With sweet musk-roses, and with eglantine.

#### DARTMOUTH, DEVONSHIRE.

DARTMOUTH is a sea-port town of some extent, on the southern coast of Devonshire, near the confluence of the river Dart with the English Channel.

The manor in which Dartmouth is situated was granted by William the Conqueror to Judhael de Totnais, and, together with the manor of Totness, passed to the family of the Zouches. After passing into the possession of other families, the manor became the property of the town, in the fifteenth year of Edward the Third's reign. After this period, it appears to have fallen into the hands of the crown, and was then presented to Lord Falconbridge. After many changes in the possession, the manor finally came into the hands of the corporation, in whom it is still vested. In the reign of Edward the Third, the town had a charter presented to it, by which the burgesses were invested with the power of choosing a mayor every year. The corporation, founded by virtue of this charter, consists of a mayor, recorder, two bailiffs, and twelve common councilmen, with other inferior officers. Dartmouth sent members to Parliament as early as the twenty-sixth of Edward the First. An intermission afterwards occurred for a few years, and the privilege was again exercised, and has continued so uninterruptedly.

The town of Dartmouth, considered without reference to the noble sea-view obtained from it, is not distinguished for its beauty, as the houses are in general mean and irregularly built; but still the antique appearance which they present is often picturesque. It is the situation of the town, however, with respect to the sea, that constitutes its striking beauty. It is built on the sloping side of a declivity which sinks gradually to the margin of the water, the streets being arranged above each other at different elevations. The streets of the town are partially paved, and are supplied with water, brought by pipes from springs in the neighbourhood. There are two churches in Dartmouth, belonging to the three parishes of St. Petrock, St. Saviour, and Townstall. The first mentioned church is beautifully situated near the entrance to the harbour. The living of St. Saviour's is in the patronage of the mayor and corporation. The church, which is called the Mayor's Chapel, is a spacious cruciform (cross-like structure,) possessing considerable internal beauty, although the exterior is not very striking. The interior of the church is principally in the decorated style of English architecture; the pulpit is of stone, richly sculptured and gilt; the wooden screen is an elaborate and highly enriched specimen of carving in the decorated style; and the stalls of the corporation are of good modern workmanship.



VIEW OF DARTMOUTH.

It is however as a sea-port that Dartmouth presents the most prominent claim to attention. The harbour is sufficiently capacious for the reception of five hundred vessels, and possesses great security, together with a deep and tranquil bosom of water: it is indeed so sheltered from outward storms, that the surface often remains undisturbed, while the sea, distant only a quarter of a mile from it, is violently agitated. The entrance to the harbour of Dartmouth is on the south, between the ruins of Kingswear Castle and the Fort and Church of St. Petrock, where a battery has been erected for its defence. The harbour or port extends from the river Teign to the river Erme, including a range of coast forty miles in length, and is under the superintendence of a governor, appointed by the corporation and paid by the crown. An artificial quay has been constructed at that part of the harbour opposite the town of Dartmouth, together with a custom-house, and other offices requisite for the despatch of business. No less than three hundred and fifty vessels belong to the port, averaging seventy-two tons' burden each. The trade which these vessels carry on is chiefly with Newfoundland, the English coast, and the collieries. There is, as may be supposed, considerable trade carried on in ship-building, for which purpose commodious dock-yards have been constructed; but the inhabitants are principally engaged in the Newfoundland and other fisheries, in which more than three thousand persons are in one way or other employed.

A recent writer, speaking of Dartmouth, observes:

The surrounding scenery is strikingly beautiful: the view of the town from the bay is strikingly picturesque; and the rocks, which are of a purple coloured slate, are finely contrasted with the verdant foliage of the trees in which the houses are embosomed, extending for nearly a mile along the coast, and interspersed with a rich variety of plants and

shrubs. The bay, in several points of view, from which the town and the sea are excluded by projecting rocks, has the appearance of an inland lake, noted for its romantic beauty.

The river Dart, the port to which it gives the name of Dartmouth, and the elevated district from which it springs, and to which it gives the name of Dartmoor, have all been celebrated by Carrington, the Devonshire poet, in his poem of *Dartmoor*:—

How drear the stillness brooding o'er thy lake,  
Secluded Cranmere, yet from thee flow life  
And boundless beauty; thine the arrowy Dart,  
Fleetest of rivers. Though the desert lifts  
Awhile its tors above him, yet he sweeps  
Full soon impatient down to vales of bliss—  
Lovely as thine, Ausonia.

\* \* \* \* \*

The voice of Dart

Is loud and hoarse, his cataracts uplift  
Their roarings to the woods; but Oh! how sweet  
The music of his gentler tones! for he  
Has tones of touching sweetness. Ye who love  
The thunder and the melody of streams  
That from the mountain lead, careering on  
Through foam and conflict ever,—seek the bank—  
The varied bank of Dart. Oh! that my feet  
Were free, *Holne Chase*, to linger in thy depths,  
Profound of shade; while deep below he rolls  
Where scarce the eye the flashings of his flood  
Discerns between the foliage. Yet anon  
He spreads his bosom to the beam, and shoots  
By vale, and hill, and precipice, and cliff  
Wood-crowned, and smiling cot, and mansion veiled  
In clustering leaf, until he proudly blends  
With *Dartmouth's* echoing wave. And as he flies  
Like the winged shaft, the wanton zephyrs breathe  
Delicious fragrance; for upon his banks,—  
Beautiful ever,—Nature's hand has thrown  
The odorous myrica.

The *Cranmere*, mentioned in the above lines, is an elevated spot surrounded by a morass, from which



sufficient efficacy to restore from epileptic fits. It was also considered to be an effectual antidote against poison. The medicinal qualities ascribed to it by our old herbalists are also many. Gerard tells us, among many other excellences, that "Time boyled in water and drunken is good against the cough and shortness of breath," and also that "made into a powder, it is good against the sciatici, the pain in the side and breast, and is profitable also for such as are fearful, melancholy, and troubled in mind." It is spoken of in CULPEPER'S *Herbal* as "A noble strengthener of the lungs." It is recommended to be used as an ointment for removing warts and other swellings, and the gout is said to be relieved by thyme, in works of the above class, that we might suppose it a kind of universal remedy, except for a short list appended to some of the descriptions, and bearing the title of *Hurts*. One of the hurts, or injurious properties of thyme seems to be, that when used immoderately it is apt to heat the body.

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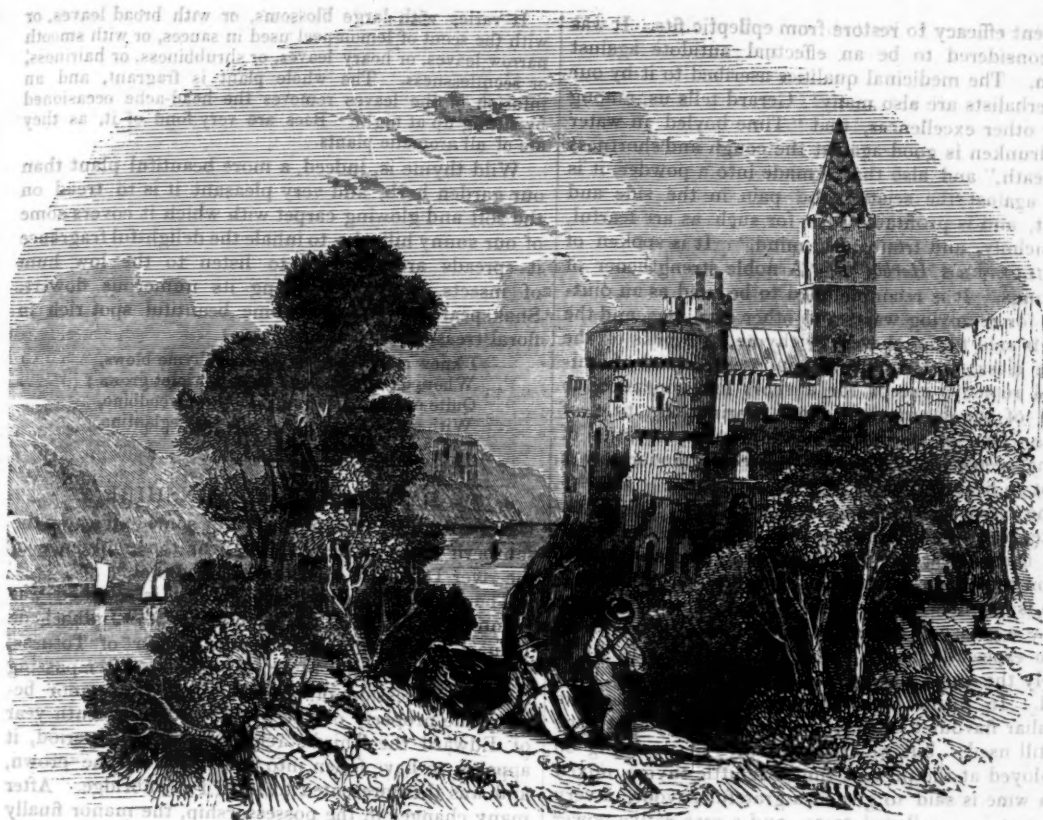
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The town of Dartmouth, considered without reference to the noble sea-view obtained from it, is not distinguished for its beauty, as the houses are in general mean and irregularly built: but still the antique appearance which they present is often picturesque. It is the situation of the town, however, with respect to the sea, that constitutes its striking beauty. It is built on the sloping side of a declivity which sinks gradually to the margin of the water, the streets being arranged above each other at different elevations. The streets of the town are partially paved, and are supplied with water, brought by pipes from springs in the neighbourhood. There are two churches in Dartmouth, belonging to the three parishes of St. Petrock, St. Saviour, and Townstall. The first mentioned church is beautifully situated near the entrance to the harbour. The living of St. Saviour's is in the patronage of the mayor and corporation. The church, which is called the Mayor's Chapel, is a spacious cruciform (cross-like structure,) possessing considerable internal beauty, although the exterior is not very striking. The interior of the church is principally in the decorated style of English architecture; the pulpit is of stone, richly sculptured and gilt; the wooden screen is an elaborate and highly enriched specimen of carving in the decorated style; and the stalls of the corporation are of good modern workmanship.



VIEW OF DARTMOUTH.

It is however as a sea-port that Dartmouth presents the most prominent claim to attention. The harbour is sufficiently capacious for the reception of five hundred vessels, and possesses great security, together with a deep and tranquil bosom of water: it is indeed so sheltered from outward storms, that the surface often remains undisturbed, while the sea, distant only a quarter of a mile from it, is violently agitated. The entrance to the harbour of Dartmouth is on the south, between the ruins of Kingswear Castle and the Fort and Church of St. Petrock, where a battery has been erected for its defence. The harbour or port extends from the river Teign to the river Erme, including a range of coast forty miles in length, and is under the superintendence of a governor, appointed by the corporation and paid by the crown. An artificial quay has been constructed at that part of the harbour opposite the town of Dartmouth, together with a custom-house, and other offices requisite for the despatch of business. No less than three hundred and fifty vessels belong to the port, averaging seventy-two tons' burden each. The trade which these vessels carry on is chiefly with Newfoundland, the English coast, and the collieries. There is, as may be supposed, considerable trade carried on in ship-building, for which purpose commodious dock-yards have been constructed; but the inhabitants are principally engaged in the Newfoundland and other fisheries, in which more than three thousand persons are in one way or other employed.

A recent writer, speaking of Dartmouth, observes:

The surrounding scenery is strikingly beautiful: the view of the town from the bay is strikingly picturesque; and the rocks, which are of a purple coloured slate, are finely contrasted with the verdant foliage of the trees in which the houses are embosomed, extending for nearly a mile along the coast, and interspersed with a rich variety of plants and

shrubs. The bay, in several points of view, from which the town and the sea are excluded by projecting rocks, has the appearance of an inland lake, noted for its romantic beauty.

The river Dart, the port to which it gives the name of Dartmouth, and the elevated district from which it springs, and to which it gives the name of Dartmoor, have all been celebrated by Carrington, the Devonshire poet, in his poem of *Dartmoor*:—

How drear the stillness brooding o'er thy lake,  
Secluded Crammere, yet from thee flow life  
And boundless beauty; thine the arrowy *Dart*,  
Fleetest of rivers. Though the desert lifts  
Awhile its tors above him, yet he sweeps  
Full soon impatient down to vales of bliss—  
Lovely as thine, Ausonia.

\* \* \* \* \*

The voice of *Dart*

Is loud and hoarse, his cataracts uplift  
Their roarings to the woods; but Oh! how sweet  
The music of his gentler tones! for he  
Has tones of touching sweetness. Ye who love  
The thunder and the melody of streams  
That from the mountain lead, careering on  
Through foam and conflict ever,—seek the bank—  
The varied bank of *Dart*. Oh! that my feet  
Were free, *Holne Chase*, to linger in thy depths,  
Profound of shade; while deep below he rolls  
Where scarce the eye the flashings of his flood  
Discerns between the foliage. Yet anon  
He spreads his bosom to the beam, and shoots  
By vale, and hill, and precipice, and cliff  
Wood-crowned, and smiling cot, and mansion veiled  
In clustering leaf, until he proudly blends  
With *Dartmouth's* echoing wave. And as he flies  
Like the winged shaft, the wanton zephyrs breathe  
Delicious fragrance; for upon his banks,—  
Beautiful ever,—Nature's hand has thrown  
The odorous myrica.

The *Crammere*, mentioned in the above lines, is an elevated spot surrounded by a morass, from which



springs one of the two sources of the river Dart; the point of conjunction of the sources being called Dartmeet. Holne Chase is a tract of land extending about two miles along the Dart, near Ashburton; the upper part rocky, and the lower woody. The *myrica*, alluded to in the last line, is the Devonshire myrtle.

Dartmouth had the reputation of giving birth to one of the distinguished improvers of the steam-engine: we mean Newcomen. He was a locksmith at Dartmouth, towards the close of the seventeenth century; but, notwithstanding his humble situation, he engaged in scientific researches, and carried on a correspondence with his celebrated countryman, Dr. Robert Hooke, to whom he communicated his projects and inventions. Newcomen, having had his attention excited by the schemes and observations of the Marquis of Worcester, and of Papin, relative to the steam-engine, as well as Captain Savary's proposal to employ the power of steam in draining the mines of Cornwall, conceived the idea of producing a vacuum below the piston of a steam-engine, after it had been raised by the expansive force of the elastic vapour, which he effected by the injection of cold water to condense the vapour. Newcomen, in conjunction with others, took out a patent for his invention. This invention was one of the many steps by which the steam-engine gradually attained its subsequent and still increasing importance.

#### ON KREASOTE.

WHEN charcoal is prepared by the destructive distillation of wood, in the manner described in our account of the preparation of charcoal for gunpowder, (*Saturday Magazine*, Vol. XIV., where drawings of charcoal furnaces are given,) several products are obtained, which may thus be arranged:—1st, gaseous matter, 2nd, volatile empyreumatic oils, 3rd, empyreumatic resins, 4th, aqueous products, and 5th, charcoal. Among the liquid products, the most valuable are pyroligneous acid, or wood-vinegar; pyroligneous ether, or wood-spirit; and kreasote. We are about to invite the reader's attention to the remarkable properties of the last mentioned substance.

KREASOTE is present in crude pyroligneous acid, but is most conveniently obtained from that part of the oil distilled from wood-tar, which is heavier than water. The process is, however, very tedious and complicated, and not sufficiently interesting to the general reader, to be stated here. Kreasote was discovered by Dr. Reichenbach in the year 1832; and there can be no doubt that the process for obtaining this substance will be greatly abridged, when chemists are better acquainted with its properties.

In its pure state, kreasote is a colourless, transparent, oily liquid, somewhat heavier than water; it has an oily feel, and leaves a greasy stain on paper, which stain disappears after some time: its odour is peculiarly penetrating and disagreeable, like that of over-smoked meats; when applied to the tongue, it produces great pain and corrodes it; the taste is burning and caustic, exciting the flow of saliva, and leaving an impression of sweetness. Kreasote evaporates on exposure to light and air. It boils at  $397^{\circ}$ , and retains its fluidity at  $-17^{\circ}$ ; that is, at  $49^{\circ}$  below the temperature at which ice melts. It has an unusual degree of refrangibility, and when diffused in thin films, it displays very vivid and beautiful colours. It can be distilled without change, and when used with a wick, instead of oil, it burns with a strong sooty flame. It does not conduct electricity: it is neither acid nor alkaline, but unites with some acids and

alkalis. It is soluble in eighty times its own bulk of water; but is freely soluble in alcohol and ether. It is decomposed by nitric or sulphuric acids.

A singular property of kreasote is that of instantly coagulating albumen; such, for example, as the white of egg. A considerable quantity of albumen exists in the blood of animals; hence the value of kreasote as an external application in stopping the flow of blood from wounds, leech-bites, &c. It has also been found useful in many cutaneous diseases: but great care is necessary in its application; for, being a powerful poison, it may produce death by being absorbed into the system. When considerably diluted, it is given as an internal remedy in cases of nausea, sea-sickness, &c.; and it is said to create a sensation of warmth in the stomach; if the dose be repeated at short intervals, it produces intoxication. Animals, fishes, and insects, plunged into a very dilute solution of kreasote, die immediately in strong convulsions, and most plants are killed by being watered with this solution.

Kreasote is truly admirable as a remedy for the tooth-ache: that is, in such cases where the pain is occasioned by decayed teeth; and it has recently been applied with success in certain cases of deafness.

But there is no property of kreasote so valuable and remarkable as that from which it derives its name, viz., its *antiseptic* property. The term is derived from two Greek words, signifying *preserver of flesh*. Wood-smoke has long been employed in curing and flavouring hams, tongues, sausages, together with many kinds of fish, as the spacious chimneys of our farm-houses amply testify. Now it has been shown that the peculiar antiseptic property of wood-smoke, is due to kreasote obtained from the wood-fuel, in the process of burning. We would also suggest that the peculiar smell, which is remarked by the traveller, on entering many of the continental towns where wood-fuel is alone used, is due to the same cause. The kreasote, from the wood being converted into vapour, passes with the smoke into the air, and thus this powerful substance may impart an odour to a whole district; especially when there are several hundred or thousand wood-fires burning at the same time. Pyroligneous acid and tar have the same antiseptic properties as kreasote, but in a smaller degree. The acid was long ago used in the process of curing provisions on a larger scale, in preference to the more tedious process of smoking. Meat, or fish, placed for a few seconds in pyroligneous acid, and then hung up to dry, acquire a fine flavour, and can be kept for a long time. Beef salted for six hours, and then placed for three minutes in the acid, and allowed six days for drying, was found to be equal to the best Hamburg beef, and could be kept as long. A large number of haddocks was prepared by a similar process with favourable results. Herrings, steeped in the acid for three hours, were found to have acquired too strong and full a flavour; but when boiled, and then simply dipped into the acid, the flavour was very agreeable. In anatomical preparations kreasote has been employed with singular success; and the addition of a few drops of kreasote to the spirit of wine, in which such preparations are preserved, is of the greatest efficacy. In stuffing birds, and in other illustrations of Natural History, there can be no doubt of the advantage of employing this useful article.

The application of tar as a preservative of timber, cordage, &c., is very great: its efficacy in this respect is due almost entirely to the presence of kreasote.

A solution of kreasote in water exhibits antiseptic properties surpassing those of the pyroligneous acid just named. Fresh meat, on being soaked for half an hour in kreasote water, may be exposed to a sum-



mer's sun for days together without acquiring any taint; on the contrary it becomes dry and hard, and has the flavour of good smoked meat. Such meat, however, should not be boiled, because the flavour becomes by that means unpleasant: it may be eaten uncooked, after the German fashion, or it may be broiled or toasted.

A few drops of kreasote to as many gallons of ink will effectually prevent mouldiness. When added to whiskey, it gives it the *peat* flavour; and we may state, that a large quantity of the so called "genuine" Hollands, sold in London, is nothing more than gin, or cheap whiskey, with the addition of a little kreasote.

## ON SKILLED LABOUR.

### No. III.

In our former papers on this subject we have shown the importance of skilled labour to society, and of an apprenticeship to one or other department of it, to the children of our peasantry. We proceed to point out the means by which even poor parents may best secure this inestimable advantage for their children.

Let us first make one remark. It is of great importance that the proportion of boys apprenticed to different trades should be regulated by the demand for work in those trades. To illustrate this, let us suppose that all the youth of England were bound by settled laws, as unchangeable as those of *caste* in India, to divide themselves among certain trades in fixed proportions. The inevitable consequence would be, that some kinds of skilled labour, owing to an excess in the number of boys apprenticed to them, would come to be underpaid, while the wages in others would, from the opposite cause, become so exorbitant as to invite foreigners to compete with native workmen; a result which should only happen in the case of native workmen being found inadequate to supply all departments of skilled labour, after being fairly portioned out amongst them. To be sure, the changes constantly going on in society enable us, at the best, only to approximate this proportioning of the supply to the demand for skilled labourers. Thus, at the present day, the demand for working engineers, a class of workmen our forefathers hardly had any demand for, is rapidly augmenting, while we suspect there are now more farriers and horse-keepers than are needed, owing to the number that the railways must have thrown out of employment. Such changes the peasantry of Scotland, in their hereditary eagerness to avail themselves of everything that can be turned to the advantage of their children, are quick to observe; and, perceiving the growing demand for working engineers, they add that to practical husbandry, gardening, forestry, and other branches of skilled, we may even say scientific, labour, in which thriving Scotchmen are to be found in their own and other countries, thanks to the affectionate and intelligent foresight of the humble parents who piloted their early course from the quiet haven of some secluded village into the wide sea of life. These remarks we particularly recommend to the patrons of industrial schools. We cannot but think that there is danger of an excess of labourers in the kinds of skilled labour which these schools patronize, unless a careful out-look is maintained by their directors.

But how shall a poor couple, earning, perhaps, at most, from ten to twelve shillings a week, contrive to secure for a numerous family the industrial skill by which their children, on becoming parents in their turn, may earn from twenty to thirty shillings a week. Apparent impossibility in such a case is apt

to produce despair, which, in turn, is the death of all strenuous endeavour. But such a feeling is most unworthy of Christian parents. They have something more than their own endeavours to look to. They have the promises of the providence of Him who can make small means effect great ends in his own good time and way, but who will grant nothing to the fearful or the slothful. Indeed, in every point of view, it is well that the humble cottager and his partner in life should keep their thoughts ever directed to the God, to whom their united prayers ought daily to ascend, else the love they bear their children, becoming a merely selfish and earthly passion, even when most hopeful and strenuous, may degenerate into parsimony, covetousness, and avarice.

Poor parents cannot begin too soon to lay by savings and what are called God-sends, however small, for their children's future good. How often does a foolish indulgence of their children's appetite or vanity induce them to spend in small sums what, in a course of years, if carefully saved, might secure the greatest advantages to those very children in after life; and the indulgences thus foolishly wasted, may meanwhile be hurting the health and injuring the morals of the child. Ill health and bad passions are the two grand causes of unhappiness in children. Now to guard against the first, nothing is more important than plenty of the simplest food, given at regular times; while giving a child dainties between meals, by disordering his stomach, makes present gratification to be dearly purchased by perhaps an obstinate derangement of the child's health, revealing itself in fretfulness and general disease. Again, though the gratification of a child's vanity in dress seems a more harmless kind of indulgence, how much better to clothe both boys and girls with the utmost simplicity, and to let them know that whatever is thus saved, is not the less intended for their comfort, but is reserved for the more important wants of their riper years. The very lesson of forethought, thus given to them, is valuable.

We would not have children trained to fondness of money. It is a most degrading passion—stamped with the peculiar reprobation of God himself in Scripture. But they ought to be taught to regard money, in every case, however apparently trifling the amount may be, as a talent which we must not waste, and for which we must give account to Him who marks the widow's mite and its destination. Children should be early taught the right uses of money, and the poorest should learn not only how to save it from being needlessly spent, but also cheerfully to devote it, when an occasion offers, to some good or kind purpose.

And if parents ought to check, instead of encouraging, the indulgence of appetite and vanity in their children, so especially ought they to keep down those vices in themselves. We fear the rich are much to blame for the weakness of the poor in this respect. How many a servant girl, on becoming a laborious man's wife, takes with her into her new home a taste for luxurious living and gay clothing, acquired in the families where she has served—families, perhaps, who professed being followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, and whom the dignity of being sons of God, ought to have raised above the passion for splendour of outward appearance. Those mistresses show the truest sense of their dignity who shame their servants out of expensiveness of dress by their own simplicity in that respect.

While an affectionate regard for their children's future comfort, ought to lead parents in the rank of life to which we address ourselves, to avoid all need-

less expense, they ought to be no less careful to shun all dishonest gains. There is a kind of low cunning which too often passes for wisdom among our peasantry, but which, in reality, is the greatest folly. It is shown sometimes in flattering and fawning upon their more wealthy neighbours, and teaching their children to do the same, for the sake of paltry advantages, exorbitant returns for slight services, and the like. All this is but to give children the idea that if they are to rise in the world at all, it must be by cajoling or cheating the rich and the simple; whereas, next to the fear of God, and the keeping of his commandments, a manly independence and superiority to everything low and base, are the surest foundations of a steady, though possibly a slow rise; and even though it should please God to keep a man's family always poor, with such qualities they will always be respected by those whose respect is worth the having.

Poor parents are sometimes tempted to what is certainly a more honourable, but still a bad means of making sudden gains, and that is undertaking piece-work beyond their proper strength. We have seen this attended by the worst consequences. In order to fit the body for extraordinary exertion, the labourer is tempted to eat and drink to repletion, to take strong drink, and to do everything in a hurry, so that his life is spent between sleep and violent exertion; no time for prayer, for quiet enjoyment of his home, for watching the tempers and the habits of his children, and relieving the cares of his wife. Thus soul and body both suffer for the sake of a sum which, with regular industry and economy, might be acquired, perhaps not so quietly, but far more safely.

We now come to the devices by which a labouring couple may add to their regular earnings, by improving to the best advantage their savings. These are so various, and depend so much on the peculiar circumstances of different places and occupations, that no one rule can be given for all. Some places on the coast are favourably situate for the men engaging in the herring fishery during the season for it, though employed in land trades for the rest of the year; and we know small towns and villages, where tailors, shoemakers, weavers, in short the whole male population in that rank of life, club together in parties of three, four, or five, provide boats, with their fishing-gear, go off to the North Sea herring fishery, and divide the profits according to certain pre-arranged proportions,—so much for the capital furnished, so much for each man's time, labour, and skill. The Dutch carry this still further, as may be seen from our papers on the Dutch fisheries. On some parts of the coast, women and children as well as the men add to their earnings by collecting shell-fish, shrimps, &c.

But there is no part of the country, however remote from the sea, or from markets, in which the labourer or artisan, who keeps such an object steadily in view, may not eke out his usual earnings by some employment of a different kind, and common sense will show that it ought to be different, as thus only it becomes a recreation, instead of a labour. Thus a hand-loom weaver will find relief in the occasional use of the spade and hoe, while the hedger and ditcher would be found quite incapable of doing so, though he might find it an amusement to sit by the fire-side, talking to his wife and children, and at the same time netting, making baskets, mending shoes, or knitting stockings. Not that even he should give up the idea of having a little garden of his own, for that need not make any serious addition to his out-of-door employments; and it is what his wife and children may so far assist in making productive.

The child that is too young to dig may at least gather stones and pick out weeds; and what is of great consequence, learn lessons of trust in Divine Providence; and a love of honest industry, as he sees the sun shining and the rain descending on the little family store of potherbs, and potatoes, and common flowers, that owe their existence to the frugality, and prudent management, and unceasing industry of his father and mother.

But the most instructive and encouraging examples of success in providing a skilled education, or apprenticeship for children, are to be found where a number of families co-operate for their common advantage in adding to their regular earnings; where, in short, a whole little community has gradually adopted a complete system of such co-operation, nicely fitted to their peculiar circumstances, in which all may take a part, and where, in addition to other advantages, all become so linked with each other as greatly to promote those kindly habits of mutual assistance and sympathy which ought ever to distinguish a Christian community. To this we must devote a separate paper.

MAN has never woven a tapestry like that which May spreads beneath us, in its green and flowery meadows; and where are the imitative works of art that can compete with a flower-garden, can even approach to a single flower? But we admire the imitations, and almost forget to look at the reality and the original. Yet while the former are costly, or even inaccessible, the others are given freely, without cost, and they are given freely to all. The Creator has even empowered us to create for ourselves, and almost without labour, beauty which no art can approach, and no price could teach it to rival. We sow a few seeds in a few minutes, and we become artists, under the kindness of the Great Artist, producing pictures, imperfect imitations of which we must have purchased with gold, as not all the gold of the universe could have stimulated an artist to approach to them.—MACCULLOCH.

YE venerable groves! whose open glades  
Invite the musing wanderer to your shades,  
Ye birds! whose honied notes enthrall the ear,  
Wake the bright morn, the darksome evening cheer,  
Ye fountains! murmuring music as ye flow,  
Ye flowers! that on their purple margins glow,  
Ye winds! that o'er those flowers soft breathing play,  
Calm the hot sky, and mitigate the day:—  
Take me, O take me to your loved retreats;  
All, all conspire to bless me with your sweets.  
Here in your soft enclosure let me prove  
The shade and silence of the life I love!  
Not idle here;—for, as I rove along,  
I form the verse, and meditate the song;  
Or mend my mind by what the wise have taught,  
Studious to be the very thing I ought.  
Here will I taste the blessings of content,  
No hope shall flatter, and no fear torment:  
Unlike the sea, the sport of every wind,  
And rich with wrecks, the ruin of mankind,  
My life an honest, humble praise shall claim,  
As the small stream, scarce honoured with a name,  
Whose gladdening waters through my garden play,  
Give a few flowers to smile, then glide away.

BISHOP HURD.

THE best foundation of peace of mind is the testimony of conscience: a sense not of perfect innocence, and of the merit of works, which would be vanity, arrogance, and a folly; but a sense of having lived before God, in sincerity and without hypocrisy,—without wilful, deliberate, presumptuous, and continual disobedience.—ARCHDEACON JORTIN.

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